

Meeting the Needs of Individuals Living with Dementia at Home

Challenges and Opportunities



Home care is an array of health and support services provided in the home and community settings to people with acute, chronic, palliative, or rehabilitative health care needs. Services include assessment, education, therapeutic interventions (e.g., nursing and rehabilitation), personal assistance with daily living activities, help with instrumental activities of daily living, and caregiver respite and support.

Care is complex Seniors with dementia receiving care at home tend to have more complex clinical needs.



66% of persons living with dementia and receiving home care services have other health conditions



1 in 5 have severe cognitive impairment.

1 in 4 require extensive assistance or are dependent for activities of daily living.

1 in 4 exhibit responsive behaviours.

1 in 4 have signs of depression (CHI, 2016)

Providers need specialized skills, knowledge, and attitudes

Only 9% of home care providers

feel adequately prepared to meet the needs of individuals living with dementia and their care partners. Less than half of home care providers reported training specific to dementia.



The biggest gap is skilled, trained, and competent staff. This is complex care requiring special competencies to maintain the dignity of individuals living with dementia
(Family Caregiver)

Top 3 challenges

Home care providers face when looking after someone living with dementia:

- 1 Lack of education and training.
- 2 Lack of time during each visit to address needs.
- 3 Limited practice guidelines for dementia care in the home.

Family caregivers are vital

While caring for someone living with dementia can provide personal satisfaction, the increased demands can negatively impact a caregiver's physical and mental health, emotional well-being, and financial situation.

Caregivers of persons living with dementia provide:

75% more care than other caregivers

and experience nearly

20% higher levels of stress



Only 19% of family caregivers

feel 'very well-prepared' in responding to behavior symptoms associated with dementia.

Getting her to eat and hearing the same thing over and over is part of the disease, but it can be taxing when it happens every 5 minutes. Some days everything can be difficult, while other days are wonderful.

(Family Caregiver)

Top 3 things

Caregivers need support with:

- 1 Help with activities of daily living and personal hygiene
- 2 Dealing with behavioural issues and repetitive questioning and requests.
- 3 Someone to help with the need for constant supervision

I am 55 and find it overwhelming at times to work full-time, parent my own children, do volunteer work, and care for a parent.

(Family Caregiver)

Actions that will have impact



Top priorities requiring immediate resources:

Awareness of and support for caregivers.



Education and training for health care providers.

Early diagnoses and management of care.



Top strategies

To make home care better for persons living with dementia and their families

- ✓ Increase the amount and type of home care services (professional care, respite, and support services).
- ✓ Make it easy to access home care and coordinate the services better.
- ✓ Provide user-friendly information to better understand dementia (e.g., diagnosis, prognosis, and ongoing care needs).

This information is based on an online survey of home care providers and family caregivers, conducted by the CHCA in 2018 to better understand what is needed to improve home care for people living with dementia and support their caregivers. [Access the report.](#)

The Canadian Home Care Association (CHCA) is a national non-profit focused on strengthening integrated community-based care. Representing public and private organizations in the home and community care sector, CHCA partners with members to tackle pan-Canadian priorities through advocacy, awareness, innovation, and knowledge exchange, striving for a seamless, accessible, accountable, evidence-informed, and sustainable patient- and family-centered care system. [CHCA Website](#) / [X](#) / [LinkedIn](#)

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